

# Retroviral crowned Africa's PR Agency of the Year at the 2023 EMEA Sabre Awards

By [Danette Breitenbach](#)

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Retroviral has been crowned Africa's PR Agency of the year at last night's 2023 EMEA Sabre Awards, held in Frankfurt, Germany. The agency also won four awards, two for its Checkers Sixty60's *Sixty60 Swindler* campaign and two for Lil-Lets for its *Be You. Period* campaign, which was also the third-best campaign overall in the EMEA Platinum Sabre Award.



Source: Provoke Media [Provoke Media](#) The Retroviral agency team. The agency was named African agency of the year last night's 2023 EMEA Sabre Awards

In February both campaigns won innovation Sabres. Last night Lil-Lets won in the Practice Areas category, under Marketing Communications, and Checkers Sixty60 in the category Industry Sectors, Consumer Goods, Retailers.



## Retroviral takes the double at the EMEA Innovation Sabres

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Two other South African PR consultancies also won on the night.

In the Diamond Sabre Awards Razor - M&C Saatchi Group was awarded the Sabre Award for Superior Achievement in Reputation Management for its *500 Tonnes Light* campaign for Anglo American, while Shoprite with KAMuses won for its campaign *The power of a storyline* to highlight existing products in the Africa category.

See all the category winners [here](#)

## A zig to the agency's world zag

Mike Sharman, founder of Retroviral expressed his joy at the wins, saying he was very "chuffed and insanely proud".

"Last night's successes at the Sabre Awards really emphasise the work we are doing and how we are punching above our weight as a small agency on the tip of southern Africa, competing with the best of the best on a global scale, especially as we consider ourselves as a challenger agency for challenger brands," he says.



## Pop culture power play: Checkers plugs into *Tinder Swindler* hype

Lauren Hartzenberg 14 Feb 2022



Since the agency started just over 13 years it has been doing things differently, which really came to the fore in 2020 with its *My Kreepy Teacher* campaign.

"Since then we have been doing it our way, telling branded content and developing our stories in a way that is a zig to the agency's world zag," he explains.

The result is campaigns such as the Checkers Sixty60 *Sixty60 Swindler* and the Lil-Lets *BeYou. Period.*

"The Lil-Lets work cuts through menstrual taboos and the platform we built for Lil-Lets helps regular South African women every day to have a conversation about the fears, the scary and taboo topics all around menstruation, something that is very close to the entire agency's heart," says Sharman.

He adds: "The effort, craft, insights, understanding, and nuances from those various customer segment levels are not only resulting in impactful bottom lines for our brands but also metal winning success for our agency."

## 2023 EMEA Consultancies of the year

|                                                      |
|------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Regional Consultancies of the Year (Large):</b>   |
| BCW                                                  |
| Edelman                                              |
| FleishmanHillard                                     |
| <b>H+K Strategies</b>                                |
| Weber Shandwick                                      |
| <b>Regional Consultancies of the Year (Midsize):</b> |
| Allison+Partners                                     |
| <b>Golin</b>                                         |
| Hanover                                              |
| Porter Novelli                                       |
| WE                                                   |
| <b>Geographic</b>                                    |
| <b>Africa Consultancies of the Year:</b>             |
| BlackHouse Media                                     |
| Clockwork                                            |
| Irvine Partners                                      |
| Razor                                                |
| <b>Retroviral</b>                                    |
| <b>CEE Consultancies of the Year:</b>                |
| Grayling                                             |
| MB Communications                                    |
| <b>MSL</b>                                           |
| Seesame                                              |
| United Partners                                      |
| <b>DACH Consultancies of the Year:</b>               |
| Farner                                               |
| <b>Ketchum</b>                                       |
| MSL                                                  |
| Schwartz Public Relations                            |
| WE                                                   |
| <b>France Consultancies of the Year:</b>             |
| Fabriq                                               |
| Jin                                                  |
| LaFrenchCom                                          |
| <b>Monet + Associés</b>                              |
| Weber Shandwick                                      |
| <b>Iberia Consultancies of the Year:</b>             |
| Canela                                               |
| Edelman                                              |
| LLYC                                                 |
| <b>Marco</b>                                         |
| Torres y Carrera                                     |
| <b>Mediterranean Consultancies of the Year:</b>      |
| Action Global                                        |
| APCO Worldwide                                       |
| Bpress                                               |
| INC                                                  |
| <b>OPRG Italy</b>                                    |
| <b>Middle East Consultancies of the Year:</b>        |
| APCO Worldwide                                       |
| <b>Asda'a BCW</b>                                    |
| Brazen                                               |
| Four Communications                                  |
| H+K Strategies                                       |
| <b>Nordic Consultancies of the Year:</b>             |
| BCW                                                  |

|                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------|
| H&H Group                                        |
| Spotlight                                        |
| Trigger Oslo                                     |
| <b>UK Consultancies of the Year:</b>             |
| Brands2Life                                      |
| Ketchum                                          |
| Ogilvy                                           |
| <b>W</b>                                         |
| Weber Shandwick                                  |
| <b>Specialist</b>                                |
| <b>Consumer Consultancies of the Year:</b>       |
| The Academy                                      |
| Frank                                            |
| Manifest                                         |
| <b>Splendid Communications</b>                   |
| Taylor Herring                                   |
| <b>Corporate Consultancies of the Year:</b>      |
| <b>Blurred</b>                                   |
| FieldHouse Associates                            |
| Headland                                         |
| MHP                                              |
| Third City                                       |
| <b>Creative Consultancies of the Year:</b>       |
| <b>Circle</b>                                    |
| Hope & Glory                                     |
| The Romans                                       |
| Tin Man                                          |
| Trigger Oslo                                     |
| <b>Digital Consultancies of the Year:</b>        |
| Coolr                                            |
| The Digital Voice                                |
| <b>Jin</b>                                       |
| Lynn                                             |
| <b>Financial Consultancies of the Year</b>       |
| Drofa                                            |
| <b>FGS Global</b>                                |
| Folk                                             |
| Lansons                                          |
| Vested                                           |
| <b>Healthcare Consultancies of the Year:</b>     |
| Evoke Kyne                                       |
| GCI Health                                       |
| Golin/Mrgo Health                                |
| Real Chemistry                                   |
| <b>Weber Shandwick</b>                           |
| <b>Public Affairs Consultancies of the Year:</b> |
| Grayling                                         |
| PLMR                                             |
| <b>Rud Pedersen</b>                              |
| SEC Newgate                                      |
| WA Communications                                |
| <b>Technology Consultancies of the Year:</b>     |
| Axicom                                           |
| <b>CCgroup</b>                                   |
| Harvard                                          |
| The Hoffman Agency                               |
| Milk & Honey                                     |

|                                |
|--------------------------------|
| New Consultancies of the Year: |
| 3Thinkrs                       |
| Espresso                       |
| Stirred                        |

All the winners are marked in bold.

See the list [here](#)

## ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from Wits.

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